



```
3
                (OPEN COURT, DEFENDANT PRESENT.)
1
2
              THE COURT:
                           The first matter this afternoon is
3
   1:23-CR-10, United States of America vs. Ahmed Abdalla
4
   Allam.
5
              MR. ROSS:
                          Hello, Your Honor. John Ross and
6
   Joe Batte here for the USA; we are ready.
7
              MR. GERTZ:
                           Judge, Ryan Gertz here for Mr.
           Tom Kelley is present as well, Judge.
8
9
              THE COURT:
                           All right. We will have the
10
   Defendant placed under oath.
              (Defendant sworn.)
11
   BY THE COURT:
12
13
   Q.
          Please state your full name.
14
          My name is Ahmed Abdalla Allam.
   Α.
15
   Q.
          How old are you?
          I'm 26.
16
   Α.
17
   Q.
          How far did you go in school?
18
   Α.
          Sorry?
19
   Q.
          How far did you go in school? What grades of
   school did you complete?
20
21
          College.
   Α.
22
          Okay. I understand you intend to plead guilty to
23
  Count 1 of the indictment. Before accepting your plea of
   guilty, the Court must inform you of certain rights you
24
  have under the law and determine you understand the
25
```

- Have you discussed the facts of this case, the charges pending against you and any possible defenses you may have and your decision to plead guilty with your attorney?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. Are you satisfied that your attorney has fully
- 17 considered these factors?
- 18 A. Sorry?
- 19 Q. Are you satisfied that your attorney has fully
- 20 considered these factors?
- 21 A. What factors?
- 22 Q. Well, the charges pending against you, the
- 23 possible defenses, what we just discussed?
- 24 A. Can you repeat it, please.
- 25 Q. Yes. The first question was have you discussed

- 1 the facts of this case, the charges pending against you,
- 2 any possible defenses you may have and your decision to
- $\mathsf{3}$ plead guilty with your attorney, which you said yes.
- 4 Then I said are you satisfied that your attorney has
- 5 fully considered these factors. The factors relate back
- 6 to those items that I listed in the first question.
- 7 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 8 Q. Are you fully satisfied with your counsel's
- 9 representation and advice given to you in this case?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Are you a citizen of the United States?
- 12 A. Yes, ma'am.
- 13 Q. If you desire to change your plea of guilty to a
- 14 plea of not guilty at any time during these proceedings,
- 15 I will permit you to do so. Have you read and discussed
- 16 the indictment with your attorney?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. After consulting with your attorney do you
- 19 understand the charges against you?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. So that you will fully understand the nature of
- 22 the charges, the Court will now inform you of the
- 23 elements of the offense with which you are charged. You
- 24 are charged in Count 1 of the indictment with a violation
- 25 of 18 U.S.C. Section 922(q)(2)(A), possession of a

```
7
1
   that.
2
              MR. GERTZ: As a practical matter, there was a
3
   school zone sign nearby. So...
4
              THE COURT: Right. But he has got to admit
5
          I mean that's part of the elements.
   that.
6
              MR. GERTZ:
                          I understand. We're agreeing with
   it, that he knew he was within a thousand feet of a
            Where we are hung up being on the school
9
   versus --
10
              THE COURT:
                          No, we are not talking about that.
   We are talking about he has to have reasonable cause to
11
   believe he was in a school zone.
12
13
                          Right, which the law defines is
              MR. GERTZ:
14
   within a thousand feet of the school grounds.
15
              THE COURT:
                          Right. But he has got to admit
16
   that.
          That you knew you were within a thousand feet of a
17
   school; is that correct?
              THE DEFENDANT: Yes.
18
19
   BY THE COURT:
20
   Q.
         Okay. And were you -- did you see the sign that
   said school zone?
21
22
         What?
   Α.
23
              (Attorney confers with client.)
         Yes.
24
   Α.
25
         So you understand the nature of the charge and
   Q.
```

23

24

25

this case?

Do you understand the range of punishment that applies in

would be required to pay a special assessment of \$100.

- A. Yes, I understand that's the maximum.
- Q. Right. It's a range. It's up -- not more than 3 five. Do you understand the range?
- 4 A. Yes, Your Honor.

14

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

Q.

6 released from prison, you will be supervised by the
7 probation department under conditions set by the court.
8 A term of supervised release is imposed in addition to
9 any sentence of imprisonment. A violation of the
10 conditions of supervised release can subject you to
11 imprisonment for a period of time or even the entire term

Supervised release means that after you are

of supervised release without credit for any time already served. You would be granted a hearing on any alleged

occurred, it will determine the term of imprisonment after consulting the advisory sentencing guidelines.

violations and, if the Court finds a violation has

If applicable, the Court may order you to make restitution to any victim or to forfeit certain property to the government.

The United States Sentencing Commission has issued advisory guidelines for judges to consult in determining the sentence in a criminal case. The Court must consider but may depart from these guidelines when reasonable under the circumstances.

Have you and your attorney talked about how

- 1 the Sentencing Commission guidelines might apply to your
- 2 case?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Do you understand that the Court will not be able
- 5 to determine the advisory guideline sentence of your case
- 6 until after the presentence report has been completed and
- 7 you and the Government have had an opportunity to
- 8 challenge the facts reported by the probation officer?
- 9 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 10 Q. Do you understand the sentence imposed might be
- 11| different from any estimate your attorney may have given
- 12 vou?
- 13 A. Sorry?
- 14 Q. Do you understand the sentence imposed may be
- 15 different from any estimate that your attorney may have
- 16 given you?
- 17 A. What does that mean?
- 18 Q. Well, your attorney may have estimated the range
- 19 or the punishment may be X. But the sentence may be
- 20 different from that. Do you understand the sentence
- 21 imposed can be different from any estimate your attorney
- 22 may have given you, but it would be within the --
- 23 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 24 Q. -- guideline range. Do you also understand that
- 25 after it's been determined what guideline applies to your

```
case the judge has the authority to impose a sentence that is more severe or less severe than the sentence called for by the guidelines?
```

- (Attorney confers with client.)
- 5 A. Yes.

- Q. Do you understand if the sentence is more severe than you expected you will still be bound by your plea and will have no right to withdraw it?
- 9 (Attorney confers with client.)
- 10 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 11 Q. Do you understand that under some circumstances
- 12 you or the Government may have the right to appeal any
- 13 sentence that I impose?
- 14 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 15 Q. Do you understand you will be required to serve
- 16 the entirety of any term of incarceration that's imposed
- 17 except for good time deductions. Parole is not
- 18 available?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Do you understand that the offense to which you
- 21 are pleading guilty is a felony offense; that if your
- 22 plea is accepted you will be judged guilty of that
- 23 offense and that such adjudication may deprive you of
- 24 valuable civil rights such as the right to vote, the
- 25 right to hold public office, the right to serve on a

- 1 jury, the right to possess any kind of firearm and
- 2 federal benefits?
- 3 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 4 Q. Do you understand the sentence that could be
- 5 imposed upon you by the Court if you plead guilty?
- 6 A. Sorry?
- 7 Q. Do you understand the sentence that could be
- 8 imposed upon you by the Court if you plead guilty?
- 9 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 10 Q. Is your plea voluntary?
- 11 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 12 Q. It is the result of force, threats or promises by
- 13 anyone to persuade you to plead guilty?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Is your decision to plead guilty based on
- 16 discussions between the Government's attorney, your
- 17 attorney and you?
- 18 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 19 Q. Have you ever been treated for any mental illness
- 20 or addiction to narcotic drugs?
- 21 A. What?
- 22 Q. Have you ever been treated for any mental illness
- 23 or addiction to narcotic drugs?
- 24 A. No, Your Honor.
- 25 Q. Are you now under the influence of any drug,

medication or alcoholic beverage?

A. No, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Does counsel for the Government or counsel for defense have any doubt as to the Defendant's competence to plead guilty at this time?

6 MR. ROSS: The Government does not, Your 7 Honor.

8 MR. GERTZ: No, Your Honor.

9 BY THE COURT:

2

3

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

- 10 Q. And, Mr. Allam, do you understand that you have a
 11 right to plead not guilty to any offense charged against
 12 you and to persist in that plea?
- 13 A. Yes, Your Honor.
 - Q. If you plead not guilty you have the right to a trial by jury, the right to the assistance of counsel for your defense, including appointed counsel if you are unable to afford an attorney, the right to file motions making legal challenges to the Government's case against you, you have the right to be free from compelled self-incrimination, the right to see and hear all the witnesses and have them cross-examined by your attorney in your defense, the right on your own part to testify or decline to testify, the right to issue subpoenas or compulsory process to compel the production of evidence and the attendance of witnesses on your behalf, and the

right to a speedy and public trial.

If the Court accepts your plea of guilty there will be no trial, so by pleading guilty you waive the right to a trial and these other rights. Do you understand?

A. Yes, Your Honor.

Q. I understand there is no plea agreement in this case. Okay. The Government is now going to make a proffer of proof of the evidence it would offer at the time of trial to support the charges against you.

MR. ROSS: If this matter were to proceed to trial, Your Honor, we would prove every element of the charges beyond a reasonable doubt through admissible evidence as follows and the stipulation. I am summarizing from the document styled factual basis in this case.

The factual basis begins with some background information. It explains how the Beaumont Police Department became aware of Allam's presence near a school. And then on January 29th, 2023, at approximately 4:00 p.m. a Beaumont Police Department officer positioned his marked patrol unit directly behind an SUV that belonged to and was occupied by Mr. Allam in the 900 block of Forsythe Street. Allam was inside of the SUV and parked under a school zone approximately 40 feet

4

5

6

7

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

across from the school's property line adjacent to the school's playground. The officer observed that the rear license plate was obscured which was a traffic violation and at approximately 9:05 p.m. the officer observed the SUV move a short distance and failed to signal a turn as described here in the factual basis.

The officer conducted a traffic stop, spoke with Allam. The factual basis explains how the traffic stop extended over a period of approximately ten minutes before Mr. Allam was placed under arrest for the traffic violations. So after that pursuant to BPD policy, officers performed an inventory search of the SUV. Early in the inventory an officer observed a small backpack located in the center of the rear passenger floorboard and it was within Allam's reach at the time of the traffic stop. The officer picked up the backpack to determine if it had a name for his inventory. holding it he noticed it was partially unzipped and he could see what he recognized to be a marijuana grinder inside of the backpack. Based on his training and experience, he knew that that was drug paraphernalia used to grind up marijuana. At that point he believed he had probable cause to search the backpack and the vehicle for narcotics.

When he opened the backpack, the officer found

in addition to the grinder a fully loaded AR-15 style magazine and two 50-count boxes of rifle ammunition and also some what was believed to be at the time synthetic marijuana. He continued the inventory and search and found an AR-15 style rifle located on the rear passenger floorboard. The officer found another 50-count box of ammunition on the floorboard near the rifle. The rifle, magazine and ammunition that were recovered from Allam's possession are described as one Diamond Back Firearms Model DB15 multi-caliber rifle bearing serial number DB2615207, also one 30-round magazine and 150 rounds of ammunition.

The officer also found some computers and a digital camera with a telephoto lens and some United States currency.

Finally, an ATF firearm and nexus expert examined the firearm described above and determined that it was manufactured outside of the State of Texas and therefore affected interstate commerce. The expert also determined that the firearm functioned as designed and was a firearm within the meaning of federal law.

I would also note, Your Honor, that in paragraph four of the factual basis, the Defendant stipulates that he knowingly possessed this firearm. That concludes my summary of the factual basis, Your

8-10-23 Change of Plea Hearing 17 1 Honor. 2 BY THE COURT: 3 All right. Do you acknowledge and agree with the Q. Government's summary of the facts constituting proof of the commission of the offense and the charges against you in the indictment in every respect? Α. Repeat that. 8 Do you acknowledge and agree with the Q. Government's summary of the facts constituting proof of the commission of the offense and the charges against you 10 in the indictment in every respect? 11 12 Α. Yes, Your Honor. It's just a total of 150 rounds. 13 Q. What? The way he mentioned it and the way it's written 14 Α. 15 as if I have more than 150. 16 MR. GERTZ: It was a total of 150 rounds, 17 that's what it says. 18 THE COURT: Okay. 19 MR. GERTZ: It's fine. BY THE COURT: 20 21 Okay. I am not focusing on that. All right. Q.

- have you signed the document embodying the factual basis
- 23 for your plea?
- 24 Yes, Your Honor. Α.
- 25 Do you understand and agree with it? Q.

A. Yes, Your Honor. It is just there's a few errors that I don't know if we could change or fix.

(Attorney confers with client.)

THE COURT: Well, Mr. Gertz, I mean if there is something you want to bring up, otherwise it is as it is.

(Attorney confers with client.)

MR. GERTZ: Judge, it's a hyper technical factual issue, but it's in paragraph 5A. The way it reads between January 5th and January 28th. He is saying he wasn't there that whole time. He may have been there on January 5th which is when he had an interaction with police on a day that may be January 5th and then he was there in the days leading up to January 29th, but he wasn't just sitting there from January 5th.

THE COURT: Well, I didn't say that. It just says between that date, January 5th and January 28th, 2023, the Beaumont Police Department responded to nine calls for service related to Allam's presence near the school. They are just talking about the Beaumont Police Department responding to nine calls. The calls were having to do with you being near the school. Whether you were right at that moment near the school, the continuous period, that's not what that says. It just says within that time frame there were nine calls for service on

```
19
1
   different days, different times.
                               It wasn't me at the school for
2
              THE DEFENDANT:
   that amount of time. I just wanted to make sure
3
4
   that's --
              THE COURT:
5
                           Okay.
6
              MR. GERTZ:
                          Just making sure that we are not
   agreeing that he was sitting there that whole time.
8
              THE COURT:
                           No, I don't think that's what this
9
   says.
10
              MR. GERTZ:
                           Good.
11
              THE COURT:
                           Okay.
12
              MR. GERTZ:
                           We are good, Judge.
13
              THE COURT:
                           No problems? We don't need to
   change anything? Okay. Are there any other changes that
14
15
   you would offer?
16
              MR. GERTZ: He is also mentioning that the way
17
   it is presented they are talking about 150 rounds.
                                                         Ιt
18
   was a total of 150 rounds, not 150 plus 50 plus 30.
19
   is just saying it was -- it is not important to the
20
   outcome.
             It is just 150 rounds total which is what I
21
   think Mr. Ross said.
              THE COURT: Well, it looks to me on K that it
22
23
   is talking about a 30-round magazine and a 150-round
24
   magazine.
25
              MR. GERTZ: I think that's describing the
```

```
2.0
              I don't think that's describing the amount
   magazine.
2
   of --
3
              THE COURT:
                          What was -- I understand.
4
              MR. GERTZ:
                           So what was --
5
              THE COURT:
                          The ammunition was 150 rounds, but
6
   the magazines could hold capacity for a certain amount,
7
   different quantities.
8
              MR. GERTZ: Correct. That's what he's
9
   clarifying.
10
              THE DEFENDANT: Also, the firearm was boxed
11
   and it had multiple things on top of it.
12
              THE COURT:
                          Well, okay.
13
              THE DEFENDANT: They said nexus expert had
14
   done a review or something to do with that.
15
              MR. GERTZ:
                          Just means it wasn't made in
16
   Texas, traveled outside the State of Texas.
17
              THE DEFENDANT:
                               Basically saying that it
18
   mentioned that the bag was within reach, which is another
19
   showing me as if I was about to do something or the
20
   backpack had no firearm within the bag.
21
              THE COURT:
                          Had a magazine.
22
              THE DEFENDANT: Just the magazine.
23
              THE COURT:
                          Okay.
24
              THE DEFENDANT: And the backpack was also
25
   closed.
```

```
2.1
              THE COURT:
                          Well, I thought they could see a
1
2
   marijuana grinder or something like that.
                          My recollection of the video is he
3
              MR. GERTZ:
   grabs the bag and it's open about this much. He looks in
4
5
   and you can see it on the body camera.
6
              THE COURT:
                          Okay. All right. Well, I don't
7
   see there were any --
8
              MR. GERTZ:
                          It is not change worthy.
9
              THE COURT: -- substantive changes that need
10
   to be made. So anything else?
11
              MR. GERTZ:
                          No.
12
              THE COURT: Tell me in your own words what you
13
   did wrong.
14
              THE DEFENDANT: I was within a thousand feet
15
   and I possessed --
              THE COURT: A thousand feet of what?
16
              THE DEFENDANT: Of the school.
17
18
              THE COURT:
                          Um-hmm.
19
              THE DEFENDANT: Possessed a firearm and it
   wasn't intentionally. I didn't know, but --
20
21
              THE COURT:
                          Well, you knew you had the
22
   firearm, right?
23
                              No, I knew I had the firearm.
              THE DEFENDANT:
   I didn't know that I was within the school. I didn't
24
25
   step foot into the school.
```

```
23
              THE DEFENDANT: I just don't want it to
1
2
   affect --
3
              THE COURT:
                          There is only certain elements of
   the offense. If you hit those elements that's enough.
5
   It doesn't matter, really, the other parts are surplus
6
   charges I guess you could say.
7
              MR. GERTZ:
                          Right.
8
              THE COURT: I find there's a proper factual
9
   basis for the plea. And, Mr. Gertz, has the Defendant
10
   been competent and able to cooperate with you?
11
              MR. GERTZ:
                          Yes, Judge.
12
              THE COURT:
                          Do you know of any legal reason
13
   why your client should not plead guilty?
14
              MR. GERTZ:
                           No. Judge.
15
              THE COURT:
                          Do you join in his decision to
   plead guilty?
16
                         Well, let me back up and say aside
17
              MR. GERTZ:
18
   from the issues that we have already raised and the Court
19
   has already ruled on, we don't know of any other reason
   to not plead guilty, legal reason.
20
21
              THE COURT:
                          Do you join in his decision to
   plead guilty?
22
23
              MR. GERTZ:
                          Yes, Judge.
   BY THE COURT:
24
25
         And, Mr. Allam, do you have any questions you
   Q.
```

8

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

2.4

would like to ask about the charges, your rights, the
sentencing possibilities or anything else regarding this
matter?

- A. Not really. I just -- if you could just explain the process to me because he -- my lawyer explained to me how we plead guilty, we changed to not guilty and then something comes after.
- Q. Once you have pled guilty, then there's an -- I will explain it in a minute, but the probation talks with you and they prepare a presentence investigation and report and they will calculate the sentencing guidelines and they will put in factors that might affect the sentence and then you are able to -- you would be interviewed, your attorney can be with you. Then once they prepare the report, then you look at it and you can make objections or ask for clarifications and things like that. And then finally when the sentence report -- presentence report is completed, then you come for sentencing.
- 20 A. Sentencing before talks with the probation?
- Q. No, after the talks with the probation, there's a report, a final report. Probation will make a
- 23 recommendation. But the Court is not bound by that.
- It's a recommendation of probation. Then I look at the report and then you come for sentencing and then I will

1 sentence based on the report and anything your attorney 2 may have brought up or the Government for that matter.

- A. And then I would have a chance to appeal.
- 4 Q. Oh, yes.

- 5 MR. GERTZ: After sentencing.
- 6 THE COURT: Okay.
- 7 A. I think that's everything.
- 8 Q. Okay. Are you entering your plea of guilty
- 9 knowingly, freely, voluntarily and with the advice of
- 10 counsel?
- 11 A. Yes, Your Honor.
- 12 Q. How do you plead as to the offense charged in
- 13 Count 1 of the indictment, guilty or not guilty?
- 14 A. Guilty, Your Honor.
- THE COURT: It is the finding of the Court in
- 16 the case of *United States vs. Ahmed Abdalla Allam* that
- 17 the Defendant is fully competent and capable of entering
- 18 an informed plea, the Defendant understands the nature of
- 19 these proceedings and understands the consequences of his
- 20 plea of guilty, that his plea of guilty is a knowing and
- 21 voluntary plea supported by an independent basis of fact
- 22 containing each of the essential elements of the offense
- 23 and the Defendant intended to do the acts he committed.
- 24 His plea is, therefore, accepted and he is now judged
- 25 guilty of that offense.

2.6

A written presentence report will be prepared by the probation office to assist the Court in sentencing. You will be asked to give information for the report and your attorney may be present if you wish. You and your counsel will review and fully discuss the presentence report before the sentencing hearing and you may make any objections you deem necessary. You and your attorney will have an opportunity to address the Court at the sentencing hearing.

The Defendant is now referred to the probation office for a presentence investigation and report. And Defendant is remanded to the custody of the United States Marshal and pending preparation of the presentence report will again be delivered to this court for purposes of sentencing. If there's nothing further, then you are excused.

(Proceedings concluded, 3:42 p.m.)

COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ON THIS DATE, OCTOBER 4, 2023, THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT TRANSCRIPT FROM THE RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

